DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 164 594 TM 008 129

TITLE	Competencies Commission. Summary Report of the Commission.
INSTITUTION	Berea City School District, Ohio.
PUB DATE	15 Jun 77
NOTE	33p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Basic Skills; *Educational Assessment; Educational Diagnosis; Educational Needs; *Educational Objectives; *Graduation Requirements; Mastery Learning; *Minimum Competency Testing; *Performance Based Education; Secondary Education; Student Certification
IDENTIFIERS	Adult Performance Level; Berea City School District OH; Ohio (Berea)

ABSTRACT

Six goals are essential to basic skills mastery. Goal one is the identification of specific competencies and performance indicators which are necessary for students to master to become a coping adult. The appendix lists 17 competencies modeled after the Adult Performance Level Project (APL). Competencies are organized into five knowledge areas: health, community resources, consumer economics, government and law, and occupational knowledge; and five basic skills areas: reading, listening, writing, computation, and problem solving. To implement goal two, the development of a comprehensive assessment model to diagnose student needs in functional skills from grades 8 to 11, students take reading and mathematics tests in grade 8, and 2 versions of the APL test in Grade 10. Goal three is the expansion and refinement of a Minimum Competencies Assurance Program to help students with deficiencies identified by the tests. Goal four advocates considering multiple or differential diplomas (academic, honors, vocational, regular, or certificate of attendance). To implement the competencies concept as a graduation requirement for the Finally, program success should be continually monitored and publicly reported. (CP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED164594

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

COMPETENCIES COMMISSION

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE COMMISSION

TM008 129

BEREA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
June 15, 1977

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Berea City Schools
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
• Letter of Transmittal	iii
• Roster of Commission Members	iv
• The Setting: Background	1
• Competencies Commission Organization Tasks of the Commission Graduation/Diploma Requirements Product Goals	2
• Research and Study Activities of the Commission	4
• Recommendations of the Competencies Commission	6
• Appendices Basic Competencies and Performance Indicators Some Definitions Developed Through the Commission's Work APL Skills and Content Grid	

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

June 15, 1977

TO: Dr. J. R. Andrisek, Superintendent of Schools

FROM: Dean Kelly, Representing the Competencies Commission

RE: Summary Report of the Competencies Commission Including Recommendations

The Summary Report of the Competencies Commission Including Recommendations precedes a complete Report which will be forthcoming. Both the Summary Report and the complete Report represent nearly two years' work by a group of dedicated and interested parents, students and staff members. Acceptance and compliance with the recommendations included in this proposal will have great impact in the improvement of student skills throughout the school district.

The recommendations focus on six major goals which the Competencies Commission Members believe are of critical importance in improving the skills of students in our schools. They are:

- The identification of specific competencies and performance indicators which are necessary for individuals to master to become a coping adult.
- The development of a comprehensive assessment model designed to diagnose student needs in reading, mathematics and other functional skills beginning at grade eight and continuing through grade eleven.
- The expansion and refinement of a Minimum Competencies Assurance Program designed to provide increased assistance for students who have identified needs in the basic skills and functional competencies.
- The organization of a small Task Force, which would include some Competencies Commission Members, to study the feasibility of developing multiple or differential diplomas.
- The implementation of the competencies concept as a graduation requirement with the present tenth grade class (1977-1978) when they graduate in 1979-1980.
- The need to provide comprehensive information regarding the Competencies Concept to the total school community and the need to monitor the successes and problems related to the implementation of the competencies concept.

Accomplishing these goals will require time, talent, and effort by all segments of the school community. However, much has been done and many improvement activities are currently being planned to improve student skills further.

Thus, on behalf of the Competencies Commission, I enthusiastically support these proposals and recommend that they be approved by the Board of Education for as rapid implementation as feasible.

I further recommend that the Board of Education pass a resolution of appreciation to those individuals who have worked on the Competencies Commission.

DK/rw

ROSTER OF COMMISSION MEMBERS

Name	Role	Area
Miss Lori Rae Adams	Student	Midpark
Dr. J. R. Andrisek, Ex Officio	Superintendent	Berea City Schools
*Mr. Jeff Arndt	Student	Midpark
Mr. Steven Arndt	Student	Midpark
Miss Vicki Balzer	Teacher, English	Midpark
Mr. Obie Bender	Parent	Berea
Mr. Bill Bourjaily	Teacher, Mathematics	MHJHS
Miss Gail Bozic	Guidance	Ford
*Mr. Bob Carroll	Teacher, Social Science	Roehm
Mr. John Evans	Principal	Gallaher
Miss Louise Gacek	Student	Midpark
*Mr. Stuart Gay	Student	Berea
Mrs. Jan Glozer	Parent	Berea
Mr. Jim Harmon	Teacher, Mathematics	Berea
Mrs. Betty Hess	Parent	Midpark
Miss Nancy Host	Student	Berea
Mr. Dick Hurley	Principal	Berea
Mr. Tom Julius	Student	Midpark
Mr. Kurt Keesy	Student	Berea
Mr. Tom Kellums	Parent	Midpark
*Dr. Dean Kelly	Assistant Superintendent	Berea City Schools
Mrs. Emily Lucas	Parent	Midpark
Mr. Ernest Mason	Teacher, Mathematics	Berea
*Mr. David Minich	Assistant Principal	Berea
Mr. Tim Monahan	Teacher, Special Education	Berea
Mr. Lawrence Morton	Parent	Berea
Miss Jenny Oakley	Student	Berea
Miss Carol Obloy	Student	Midpark
Mrs. Catherine Oliverio	Parent	Berea
Mr. John Otterson	Student	Berea
Mrs. Helen Pugliese	Teacher, Foreign Language	Berea
Miss Lisa Sarris	Student	Berea
Mr. Joe Savino	Parent	Berea
Miss Jean Schmittau	Teacher, Mathematics	Midpark
*Mrs. Maxine Slone	Parent	Midpark
Mrs. Helen Somerville	Teacher, English	Berea
Mrs. Nancy Tereshko Patterson	Teacher, Science	Midpark
Mrs. Nadean Thumm	Parent	Midpark
Miss Ruth Uveges	Student	Berea
Mr. John Wayland	Student	Berea
*Mr. Jim Wilson	Parent	Berea
*Mr. Paul Winkel	Assistant Principal	Midpark
Mrs. Verda Winter	Teacher, Foreign Language	Midpark
Mr. Matt Witt	Student	Midpark

Steering Committee Members

THE SETTING: BACKGROUND

In August, 1975, the Berea City School District published a report entitled, *Toward a Community of Experiences: Report of the Task Force to Study the Attitudes, Values and Behaviors of High School Age Students.* This Task Force included students, members of the community, parents, teachers, administrators, and board of education members. The report focused on three major goals which Task Force Members believed are fundamental for the improvement of the climate and educational programs of the Berea High School and Midpark High School. They are:

- Improve the human relationships in the schools
- Utilize student time more effectively
- Improve student skills

The Superintendent of Schools indicated to Board of Education Members in his letter of transmittal regarding the contents of the Report that accomplishing these goals will take time and a great deal of effort by all facets of the school community. He also indicated that action steps had been taken at both high schools to improve human relationships and to utilize student time more effectively. However, he further indicated that the proposal in the Report which can have the greatest impact in the high schools and the entire school district is the proposal related to improving student skills. Basically, this section of the Report recommends that in order to graduate from high school, a student must not only accumulate 17 credits of acceptable course work and fulfill the attendance requirements; but, he must also demonstrate a prescribed level of competency in certain areas, such as: reading, writing, mathematics, human relations, and relevant content subjects which relate directly to productive adulthood.

More specifically, Task Force Members made three basic recommendations related to the improvement of student skills. They are as follows:

1. *The Berea City School District should continue to dedicate itself to raising the students' level of competency in the basic survival skills such as reading, English, mathematics, problem-solving, human relations, and other appropriate areas. The Superintendent of Schools should request that the Board of Education adopt the concept that certain skill competencies should be established that every student, except possibly some handicapped students, must master in order to receive a high school diploma.*
2. *In order that this policy may be implemented it is recommended that the Board of Education direct the Superintendent to establish a commission of the professional staff, parents, and students to determine the required skill competencies and describe them in terms of the behavior a student would have to demonstrate to show mastery. This task should be completed so that it can be implemented for tenth-grade students in the fall of 1976. The fundamental responsibility for the students' mastering these skills rests with the faculty of the school system. Therefore, the professional staff should reexamine the allocation of its resources in order to provide the students sufficient supportive and instructional help so the students can master the skills. This reexamination of the resources should be carried on in the light of two factors: (1) students have time available to learn and master the skills; (2) time spent on the learning task is critical to the rate of learning and mastery.*
3. *The required skill competencies be continually reviewed to determine whether they are appropriate and sufficiently demanding in order to encourage the students continuously to upgrade their learning.*

As a result of these recommendations, the Superintendent of Schools, directed the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction to organize a Competencies Commission of parents, students, and professional staff members to study ways and means to implement the policy changes described in the three Task Force Recommendations listed herein.

COMPETENCIES COMMISSION ORGANIZATION

Commission Members were nominated by school principals, and they were contacted in September of 1975. Each person who had been recommended as a Commission Member accepted membership on the Commission.

In order to operate effectively,an eight member Steering Committee was organized. The tasks of the Steering Committee included: developing agendas, organizing resources, contacting consultants, reviewing the research and literature, and synthesizing ideas and concepts developed by the Commission Membership.

In the initial organizational phases of the study, Commission Members identified the specific tasks of the Commission, discussed graduation and diploma requirements, and established product-goals for the Commission. These tasks, requirements and goals are outlined herein:

Tasks of the Commission:

- Identify and determine the "functional, coping, enabling and/or survival" competencies in reading, mathematics, problem-solving, human relations and other appropriate areas (consumer economics, community resources, health, occupational knowledge, government and law) which are necessary and essential for all students--prior to graduation--for successful adult living.
- Describe these competencies in behavioral terms which can be measured.
- Indicate the levels of competency which all students must demonstrate to show mastery.

Graduation/Diploma Requirements:

- Should reflect the public's expectations for secondary education.
- Should be distinctive, representing an accomplishment, at least in part, which is independent of other factors.
- Should not necessarily mean that the holder is prepared for a job nor should it particularly signify that the holder is ready for college. Rather, the diploma should certify that the graduate possesses the baseline skills and knowledge essential to an effective adult citizenship.
- An ability to read, write and compute with specified proficiency.
- A minimum proficiency in the prioritized knowledge areas or those included in the Adult Performance Level Goals.
- Possess the skills to acquire the information necessary to be a citizen and a worker.
- The successful completion of a series of courses and/or planned experiences, some of which involve a group setting.

Product Goals:

As a result of the research, study and recommendations of the Commission, personnel in the schools will--

- Assure the public that graduating classes are gaining certain skills, knowledges and understandings.
- Establish a minimum meaning to the diploma.
- Develop a functional competency for each individual student prior to graduation in seven (7) skill areas (Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, Computation, Problem-Solving and Interpersonal-Relations) related to the five (5) knowledge areas (Consumer Economics, Community Resources, Government and Law, Health and Occupational Knowledge).
- Assist individual students in obtaining the minimum skills, knowledges, and understandings which are perceived as being essential to survival in a producer-consumer society.

RESEARCH AND STUDY ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION

From 1975, when the Competencies Commission was organized, until June 15, 1977, Commission Members planned, organized and implemented over fifty-four meetings and study sessions including Commission, Steering Committees and Sub Committee Meetings. A listing of selected Commission Research and Study Activities and Tasks are outlined herein:

- Studied the High School Task Force Report intensively.
- Conducted six ERIC (Educational Resources Information Centers) searches for resources and materials.
- Contacted twenty-six State Department of Education Departments to ascertain what was being done in competency based education within specific states.
- Used the services of Educational Testing Service, American College Testing Service and Westinghouse Corporation extensively as resources for testing instruments.
- Contacted Educational Research Services to search for competency-based educational projects in progress and personnel working in the area.
- Utilized services of ERCA to identify resources and projects.
- Contacted and communicated with 88 different school systems throughout the country who has been identified as developing or implementing some type of competency-based education (60 in 1975-1976 and 28 in 1976-1977.)
- Used many on-site consultants (Dr. Nickse, Syracuse, New York; Dr. Henderson, Gary, Indiana, Mr. McCreary, NASA; Dr. MacNamee, Chicago, Illinois; Dr. Ronchi, Ohio State University; and Dr. Williams, Palm Beach, Florida).
- Identified functional or coping competencies in communication skills and computational skills along with performance indicators for these skills.
- Validated these skills (above) through feedback from local parent and civic groups.
- Transformed the communication and computation skills and performance indicators into specific test objectives and items.
- Developed the High School Reading Proficiency Test--Grades 9-12 and the Competency Test in Basic Mathematics from the communications skills, computation skills and problem-solving competencies and performance indicators designed by the Commission.
- Administered the HSRPT to all students in grades 9-12 (approximately 3700). Administered Competency Test in Basic Mathematics to a random sample (approximately 800 students). The analysis of these test scores provided further validation for the need to develop specific competency levels.

- Interpreted Reading Test data to all students and began implementing assurance programs to meet the needs of the students.
- Studied the Goals and Objectives of the Adult Performance Level Project in relationship to the competencies and performance indicators developed locally. Using the Commission's competencies and performance indicators as criteria; determined which APL Goals, Objectives and Performance Indicators would serve local needs as well as or better than those developed. Prioritized APL Knowledge and Skill Goals and Objectives in relationship to local needs.
- Utilized the services of Dr. Jerry Williams, Palm Beach County, Florida as a consultant to provide additional information regarding using the American College Testing Adult Performance Level Tests.
- Administered Adult Performance Level High School Survey Test to a random sample of tenth grade students from Berea High School and Midpark High School.
- Developed a status report, Review of Activities, in March of 1977 to determine understanding and acceptance of the Commission's work by the Commission and by various sub-publics. This Review of Activities described the tasks of the Commission, the task which had been completed, the prioritized knowledge goals, criteria for graduation requirements, diploma requirements, product goals of the Commission, definitions of the terms being used by the Commission, overview of the objectives of the High School Reading Proficiency Examination, considerations in developing tentative recommendations with some examples, a sample of the APL Grid including skill area competencies and knowledge area competencies, and a "sample or example" of possible components of an assurance program.
- Developed Tentative and Preliminary Recommendations (March 2, 1977). This document was developed by the Steering Committee using the ideas and suggestions developed by the Commission.
- Distributed Recommendations to various parent and civic groups for reactions and suggestions. Presented fourth revision (May 4, 1977) to Commission for final reactions. The fifth revision represents the final recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMPETENCIES COMMISSION

Traditionally, the high school diploma has been awarded to students who have fulfilled attendance requirements and course requirements prescribed by the State of Ohio and the Berea City School District. The Competencies Commission recommends that these two features will continue as prerequisites for receiving a high school diploma. However, in addition to these requirements, the Competencies Commission recommends a third component of demonstrated performance be added. Through this competencies and performance component, requirements for graduation become, in part, standards for learning; they shape the outcomes of schooling. Whatever constitutes graduation requirements affects what students are taught. Compliance with the new standards should not be construed to encompass the total school experience. The development of functional or coping competencies is only one part of schooling. Schools should continue to offer broad experiences in the fine arts, humanities, the usual college preparatory programs and vocationally related programs, particularly for students who have demonstrated that they are proficient in basic skills. These competency and performance standards which are recommended represent only a minimum.

If schools are to accept the responsibility for productive youth, as it seems they must, then they have some considerable obligations to prepare and to ready the students for these functional or coping competencies. The following recommendations have been developed toward the purposes of sending youth with demonstrated competencies into adulthood as well as evaluating student readiness in functional or coping skills.

1 FINDINGS:

Data from the High School Task Force Report revealed that while an analysis of student skills in the Berea City School District compared favorably with other school districts in a variety of testing situations, there were students in high school whose basic skills in reading and mathematics were not at a sufficiently high level where the students could expect to be successful in much course work.

Data from the Student Attitude Survey show that students who feel most positive about their schooling are those who get good grades, plan to continue post secondary education, and participate in school activities. Success and positive feelings about school appear to be related to the congruency between the skills of students and the skills expected by the school.

Reading teachers in all secondary schools indicate that there are large numbers of students who read below the level necessary to comprehend the materials found in many of the textbooks.

Follow-up study of graduates indicate that many students who go on to college feel they need more experience in learning how to write effectively. A study conducted by the Curriculum Review Team--Mathematics and Written Communication in 1976-1977 confirm that graduates feel they need more experiences in written communication.

An analysis of the testing conducted under the auspices of the Competencies Commission in reading and mathematics during the 1977-1978 school year further validate the fact that some students have serious reading deficiencies. There were 148 students with serious reading problems, 258 students who will require specific assistance to improve their reading skills, and 511 students who will require some classroom assistance in reading from the 9th, 10th and 11th grades. Fewer students were identified as having mathematics problems.

RECOMMENDATION RELATED TO ASSESSING THE DEGREE OF MASTERY OF SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES IN THE COMMUNICATION SKILLS, THE COMPUTATION SKILLS AND THE KNOWLEDGE AREAS [HEALTH, CONSUMER ECONOMICS, OCCUPATIONAL KNOWLEDGE, COMMUNITY RESOURCES, AND GOVERNMENT AND LAW]. THUS, THIS RECOMMENDATION RELATES TO THE SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES [THE WHAT] ALONG WITH THE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR AND THE LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY [THE HOW WELL]

- **Administer the High School Reading Proficiency Examination Berea City School District to all eighth grade students during September of 1977 to assess their competencies in reading. Use the 70% proficiency level criterion to ascertain competency and as a level to identify students who require instructional assistance.**
- **Administer the High School Mathematics Proficiency Examination Berea City School District to all eighth grade students during late September 1977 to assess their competencies in mathematics. Use the 70% proficiency level criterion to ascertain competency and as a level to identify students who require instructional assistance. (Reduce the testing load at the eighth grade level by scheduling the Career Maturity Inventory at the ninth grade level.)**
- **Administer the High School Survey Adult Performance Level Test to all tenth grade students to diagnose their knowledge level understanding and to assess their skill level performance in early November, 1977. Use these data along with national data to establish criterion levels of performance necessary for graduation. Compare data from this measurement instrument with the High School Reading and Mathematics Proficiency Test Data and Ohio Survey Test Data (Grade 8) to ascertain the predictive value of the OST at Grade 8 in relationship to knowledge and skill development. Use the 70% proficiency level criterion to ascertain competency and as a level to identify students who require instructional assistance.**
- **Administer the Adult Performance Level Test to all eleventh grade students in November of 1977 to diagnose their knowledge level understanding and to assess their skill level performance. Use the 70% proficiency level criterion to ascertain competency and as a level to identify students who require instructional assistance.***

RATIONALE:

The development of specific coping or functional skills can help individuals deal with the changing demands and pressures of schooling and society only if the individuals and those designated to assist him can diagnose specifically his needs so improvement areas can be identified. The testing instruments recommended by the Competencies Commission are diagnostic. They provide the individual and his teacher with a precise profile of his strengths and weaknesses.

The High School Reading Proficiency Examination provides data revealing the specific reading needs of each individual as does the High School Mathematics Proficiency Examination in mathematics.

The Adult Performance Level measurement instruments encompass five general content areas that collectively include most of the abilities judged to be critical to the daily life of successful, productive adults. The content areas are: Community Resources, Occupational Knowledge, Consumer Economics, Health, and Government and Law. Simultaneously, the tests measure the basic skills of reading, writing, computation and problem-solving that are deemed important for successful living.

Minimum competency is defined as a level of educational performance which predicts a reasonably good probability of a satisfactory, productive life. An analysis of the reading test scores, the mathematics test scores, and the Adult Performance Level Test scores conducted by the American College Testing Corporation indicates that the 70 per cent level is the critical point for competency, which is just slightly above the level achieved by the dependent groups in the national studies. Perhaps, the principal feature of the APL Tests is their generalization ability or external validity.

2 FINDINGS:

The programs designed to accommodate students who demonstrate deficiencies in functional skills and content area knowledge in the secondary schools of the Berea City School District compare favorably with other school districts. However, existing prevention and remedial programs must be expanded and more clearly defined. Also, these improvement programs cannot exist in a vacuum; all instructors need to assist and reinforce skill development to afford students maximum growth and achievement.

RECOMMENDATION RELATED TO PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS WHO DO NOT PERFORM AT THE PRESCRIBED CRITERION LEVELS ON THE READING ASSESSMENT, THE MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENT, THE HIGH SCHOOL SURVEY APL TEST AND THE ADULT PERFORMANCE LEVEL TEST.

- **Expand and refine the present instructional activities which are designed to assist students improve their functional skills and knowledge into a more clearly defined Minimum Competencies Assurance Program. This program will relate directly to the improvement of student skills and knowledge areas which have been identified through diagnosis and analysis as needing improvement. Furthermore, this program will include: staff development activities which focus on instructional strategies designed to assist students improve in specific skills, precise teaching and learning materials which relate to improving specific areas, articulation and communication among all levels of the school district regarding successes and problems in skill improvement, and communication and counseling with parents and students.**
- **Recommend that the Superintendent assign one individual to be responsible for the Competencies Program. This would be in addition to his other responsibilities.**

RATIONALE:

The emphasis should focus on learning related to improving specifically diagnosed needs, not on vague ideas of discipline or endurance. Recent research indicates that prevention and remedial work in skill development and content area improvement can be effective when undertaken at the high school level as well as at the elementary level. However, at the deeper level is the students' self-concept. Each person searches for positive recognition of his worth and he comes to view himself as adequate in those areas where he received assurance of his competence or success. For a student to view himself in a positive way, he must be given many opportunities to be regarded. Improvement and mastery in functional skills and knowledge areas and its public recognition provide the necessary reassurance and reinforcement to help the student view himself as adequate.*

3 FINDINGS:

Currently, the Berea City School District awards one type of diploma to all students who fulfill present graduation requirements. No specific distinctions are made for the wide range of student achievement. Regardless of the number of credits earned, the grades received in specific courses, advanced placement or honors classes, or other factors only one type of diploma is awarded.

RECOMMENDATION RELATED TO DEVELOPING DIFFERENTIAL OR MULTIPLE DIPLOMAS.

- **Recommend that a small task force composed of parents, students and educators study the feasibility of developing multiple diplomas during the 1977-78 school year. Some members of the Competencies Commission should serve as a member of this task force.**

RATIONALE:

The addition of a competency level component which all students must demonstrate as a graduation requirement suggests that every student may not be successful. Thus, there may be a few students who are not able to fulfill this competency level component as a graduation requirement. Therefore, the feasibility--the advantages and disadvantages--of awarding multiple diplomas should be studied. Such considerations as the following could be examined: an academic or honors diploma, a vocational diploma, a regular diploma, or a certificate of attendance.

4 FINDINGS:

Efforts to establish new or different policies and procedures which are major in scope and have a major impact on the school as an institution, with the students, with the staff, and with the school community have often fallen short because insufficient time has been allocated for readiness, understanding and "tooling up." Likewise, an excessive time allocation prior to implementation can also reduce effectiveness and encourage procrastination. However, sufficient time will be required for coordination and integration among those who are involved in seeking solutions for improving student skills and content knowledge.

RECOMMENDATION RELATED TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMPETENCIES CONCEPT AS A REQUIREMENT FOR GRADUATION FOR ALL STUDENTS, EXCEPT THOSE WHO HAVE SPECIFIC HANDICAPS.

- **Implement the Competencies Concept as a requirement for graduation with the graduation of the 1977-78 Grade 10 Students when they graduate in the 1979-80 school year. Use the 70% proficiency level criterion to ascertain competency. Students who perform at the 70% proficiency level on the Adult Performance Level Test at Grade Eleven will have fulfilled the competencies requirement for graduation.***

RATIONALE:

There is technical and substantive excellence in identifying and remediating specific skill and knowledge area deficiencies among high school age students with the subsequent goal of skill improvement; but, the effectiveness of this task may be limited by an inadequate delivery mechanism. A workable delivery system should include these elements: Administrative Structure (The person(s) responsible for orchestrating the system), Communication Methods (The ways messages are communicated), Communication Influences (Those influences that help people learn), Feedback (Reactions, individual statements, reports), Reinforcement (How decisions are strengthened), Monitoring (Assessing progress), Norms (Formal and informal rules), Services (The programs or activities that help students improve their skills), and Behavior (What the individual student is able to do with his newly developed skills). Thus, one must be certain that the implementation schedule provides time for readiness, development of an adequate delivery system including staff development, and effective communication to the many sub-publics in the school community; yet, the schedule should not allow unnecessary delays or excessive procrastination.

5

FINDINGS:

If one expects significant improvement in the improvement of student skills and content area knowledge over the long-term, school district-wide procedures that encourage a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of the competencies concept must be developed and implemented soon. All segments within the school community must understand and appreciate the rationale for this concept, the successes and problems related to the identification program and the assurance program, and the consequences if an individual student cannot or does not fulfill all of the graduation requirements.

RECOMMENDATION RELATED TO FEEDBACK AND PROGRESS RELATED TO THE COMPETENCIES CONCEPT TO MEMBERS OF THE COMPETENCIES COMMISSION AND OTHER GROUPS.

- Since communication of the Competencies Concept is critical to success, it is recommended that:
  - The Competencies Commission meet twice each school year to review the status, problems and plans related to implementing the Competencies Concept.
  - School personnel be assigned to plan and design a specific communications plan related to all facets of the Competencies Program. All Commission Members emphasize the importance of communicating the status of the program to all students, teachers and parents. All methods and media need to be considered.

RATIONALE:

With the definition and development of system-wide procedures that encourage a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of the competencies concept and with influential social groups and organizations providing support and assistance in evaluating implementation results, it should be easier and more effective in providing effective remedial services to those who require such service. It is recognized that certain risks exist when specific monitoring plans are designed; however, the challenge is to develop and deliver programs that provide individual growth in skill development and content area knowledge which relates directly to independent and productive citizenship for the student.

*(*Data from the reading and mathematics tests and the High School Survey APL Test will be compared continuously to data from the Adult Performance Test to ascertain the predictive value of the reading, mathematics and High School Survey APL Test as one means of monitoring the effectiveness of the early competency testing.)*

APPENDICES

BASIC COMPETENCIES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS*

The Competencies Commission identified the functional, coping, enabling and/or survival competencies in the communication skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and in the computation skills. In addition, the Commission Members developed performance indicators for these competencies. At the same time the Commission Members were creating and developing specific competencies, performance indicators and criteria to evaluate them, they were searching the literature and research projects for other groups who were working on similar projects to avoid the problem of "reinventing the wheel." In this search, Commission Members discussed, among many others, the Adult Performance Project (APL). The central objectives of APL were to specify the competencies which are functional to the economic and educational success of an individual in today's society and to develop devices for assessing those competencies. Thus, the APL Project represented one which focused on the question, "Why are certain competencies important to productive adult living?" and it was national in scope. Furthermore, this project had considerable federal as well as foundation funding. Also, the American College Testing Corporation became interested in the APL Project and they became involved in producing high-quality measurement instruments which could provide national norms and reference groups for individuals who are tested. This factor is essential in today's highly mobile society. At this point, the Commission Members began an intensive study of the APL Goals and Objectives in order to ascertain their relationships between the tasks of the Commission and the earlier work accomplished by the Commission. This study revealed a high relationship between the tasks and needs of the Commission and some of the products of the APL Project and ACT Competency Tests. As a result of further study, the Commission developed a series of functional or coping competencies which are closely related to those developed in the APL Project.

These competencies or major objectives are organized into the general knowledge areas of Consumer Economics, Occupational Knowledge, Health, Government and Law, and Community Resources as well as the specific skill areas of reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, computation, problem-solving and interpersonal relations. These competencies or major objectives represent specific requirements which the learner must master. They represent the fundamental building blocks for descriptions of the critical competencies which are required for functional or coping competency. Each major objective or competency, in turn, is described by a series of minor objectives followed by some "examples." Mastery of these objectives is manifested by the individual's ability to perform a group of tasks--to respond appropriately to specific situations which reflect the requirements of the objective.

The implications of this model becomes especially important when one attempts to translate these competencies into curriculum and training programs for students. When used for this purpose, the objectives should be considered as paradigms or general guidelines. They should not be interpreted as being engraved in stone, because it is the purpose that is the most important element for functional competency.

*(*Competencies and Objectives are used synonymously. The same is true for performance indicators and examples.)*

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 1. 1. The individual should develop a working vocabulary for these knowledge areas: Health, Government and Law, Community Resources, Occupational Knowledge and Consumer Economics. This means that the individual must be able to read, listen, write, speak, compute and solve problems at a literacy level which will enable him to function in our society. Specific objectives and examples are provided for this Major Objective 1 in the subsequent Major Objectives.

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 2. **The individual should understand the effective use of money, money substitutes, and financial services.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Know how and why income and sales taxes are collected.

Examples:

—Sales tax as regressive
—Computing specific sales tax
—Filling out a 1040 form

Objective: B. Understand the relationsbip among various denominations of money and among various weights and measures.

Examples:

—Converting paper money to coins
—Figuring out the square yardage for carpeting
—Cutting a recipe in half

Objective: C. Know how to use various media of exchange.

Examples:

—Filling out a request for money order
—Cashing a check
—Using credit cards

Objective: D. Know the various types of banking services.

Examples:

—Opening a savings account
—Balancing a check book
—Requesting a loan
—Trusts

Objective: E. Know how to select, purchase, and maintain insurance policies.

Examples:

—Determining insurance needs
—Figuring out when insurance payments are due
—Finding best insurance policy for particular needs

Objective: F. Know how to figure costs and change.

Examples:

—Cost per unit price
—Totaling a bill
—Adding service charges
—Figuring change

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 3. **The individual should know how to apply for a job.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Know how to use various sources to identify job opportunities.

Examples:

—Differences between types of sources (newspapers, agencies, word-of-mouth)
—Fees
—Which to use in particular circumstances

Objective: B. Know how to inquire about or apply for a job.

Examples:

—Writing a letter of inquiry about a job
—Asking for an application form
—Calling to set up an appointment or interview

Objective: C. Know how to fill out the various forms associated with employment.

Examples:

—What information to put on an application form
—What function a W-4 form serves
—A job evaluation form

Objective: D. Understand the compilation, construction, and importance of a resume or a description of previous jobs.

Examples:

—What to include in a resume
—How an employer uses a job history
—What information legally does not need to be reported
—Need for neatness and accuracy

Objective: E. Understand the importance of job interviews and know how to act accordingly.

Examples:

—Appropriate dress
—Promptness
—Need to anticipate obvious questions
—Relationship of interview to rest of hiring process

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 4. **The individual should know what personal habits promote good health.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Know the basic principles of health maintenance.

Examples:

—The relation of cleanliness to health
—The relation of a regular exercise program to health
—Need for adequate sleep

Objective: B. Know the basic principles of nutrition.

Examples:

—Four basic food groups
—Special types of diets (low cholesterol, low salt, diabetic)
—Meal planning

Objective: C. Understand the relationship between drugs and health.

Examples:

—Immunization programs
—Side-effects of drugs (allergic reactions)
—Over-the-counter versus prescription drugs
—Alcohol
—Nicotine

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 5. **The individual should know how to plan family or individual budgets.** This means that he or she should know:

Objective: A. What a budget is and how it should be used.

Examples:

—Advantages of making a budget
—Logical budget categories
—Using a budget to set realistic limits on spending

Objective: B. How to determine individual needs and resources.

Examples:

—Sources of income (salary, interest)
—Factors that determine need (family size, occupation)
—Setting priorities: needs versus luxuries or extras

Objective: C. How economic factors affect budgeting.

Examples:

—Inflation as a budget problem
—Seasonal employment and its effect on predictable income
—Using lists to prevent impulse shopping
—International trade

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 6. **The individual should understand how education, interests, and experience affect the kinds of employment one can or should pursue.** This means that he or she should know:

Objective: A. Which educational and job experiences are required or recommended for specific occupational categories (or families) and how these requirements relate to the duties of the jobs in those categories.

Examples:

—What clerical jobs entail
—How much experience is required for technical jobs
—Understanding why social service jobs require special training

Objective: B. The minimum qualifications for specific jobs.

Examples:

—How much training it takes to be a secretary/stenographer
—What skills are required for librarians
—What legal job requirements are for bus drivers

Objective: C. How vocational testing and counseling can help individuals identify job interests and abilities.

Examples:

—Where to go for vocational testing
—What information the counselor needs to help the client
—Understanding the relationship between ability and interest

Objective: D. What factors outside the individual might affect his or her job choices or interests.

Examples:

—Need for certain types of hours
—Location of facilities relative to home
—Job benefits such as pension, insurance, vacation

Objective: E. How to read and assess job descriptions.

Examples:

—Match between interests and job description
—Match between needs and job description

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 7. **The individual should know how to maintain a job.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Know the standards of behavior for various types of employment.

Examples:

—Need to obey company rules about promptness, lunch hours, and so forth
—How to deal with problems with other employees
—Understanding the influence of attitude

Objective: B. Understand how and why employers make decisions about promotion and dismissal.

Examples:

—Relationship between availability of jobs and opportunities for promotion
—Difference between lay-offs and firings
--Need for continuing education/growth

Objective: C. Know the legal restrictions that govern employers and employees.

Examples:

—Federal regulations governing working conditions
—Contracts
—Labor unions and unionism

Objective: D. Understand the financial aspects of employment.

Examples:

—Computing salaries
—Comparing benefits
—Calculating hours to figure amount of overtime
—Figuring out sick time

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 8. **The individual should know how and when to use various community services.** This means that he or she should know:

Objective: A. Which agencies or departments provide various types of services.

Examples:

—Services offered by police
—Services offered by fire department
—Services offered by post office
—Services offered by Humane Society

Objective: B. How to apply for or gain access to various types of community services.

Examples:

—Where to write emergency numbers for easy access
—Using a fire call/alarm box
—Applying for welfare

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 9. **The individual should understand the relationship between individual citizens and the selection and maintenance of government.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Know about the electoral process and the individual's role in it.

Examples:

—Voter registration
—Balloting
—Types of elections

Objective: B. Know about the Constitutional guarantees of individual rights.

Examples:

—Due process
—Habeas corpus
—Bill of Rights

Objective: C. Understand how the individual can try to influence her or his representatives.

Examples:

—Letter writing
—Citizen's lobbies
—Access to representatives' voting record
—Referenda

Objective: D. Know what kinds of demands the government may and does make on individuals.

Examples:

—Jury duty
—Selective Service
—Required legal documents (e.g., birth certificate)

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 10. **The individual should know where, when, and why to seek medical help.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Recognize obvious signs of illness and know which require professional attention.

Examples:

—Normal temperature versus fever
—Brief versus persistent cough
—Symptoms of contagious diseases

Objective: B. Know the various types of medical facilities typically available in a community.

Examples:

—Public Health Service
—Hospital emergency rooms
—Private clinics
—Mental health clinics
—Ambulances

Objective: C. Know how and why to follow medical instructions.

Examples:

—Following dosage directions on a prescription label
—Getting adequate exercise to restore health
—Keeping a person who is ill in bed

Objective: D. Know how and why to communicate information about health problems to others.

Examples:

—Calling a doctor to explain symptoms over the phone
—Calling an employer to explain an absence
—Filling out a Public Health Service form

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 11. **The individual should understand marketing techniques and how these affect the individual, consumers in general, and the economy.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Know various modes and techniques of advertising, including inappropriate or illegal techniques.

Examples:

—Bait-and-switch techniques
—Price-fixing
—Appeals to emotions and peer pressure

Objective: B. Know where to go for help in solving consumer complaints or problems.

Examples:

—Better Business Bureau
—Complaint department or manager within store or industry
—Boycotts

Objective: C. Know the relationship among cost, availability, and need.

Examples:

—Regulating supply through tariffs
—Influencing demand through advertising (e.g., the Pet Rock phenomenon)
—Adjusting price because of lower supply (e.g., sugar "shortage" in 1974)

Objective: D. Understand the implications of consumption in light of finite world resources.

Examples:

—Conservation of resources
—Recycling of resources
—Interdependence of nations

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 12. **The individual should know how to apply the principles of consumer economics when buying, selling, or leasing goods or services.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Know how to use catalogs, consumer guides, and other reference documents to select goods and services.

Examples:

—Using a catalog to scrutinize available products
—Using a consumer guide to find the best buy
—Using advertisements to establish product capabilities

Objective: B. Understand the principles of comparison shopping and the relation of price to quality.

Examples:

—Understanding the concepts of brand name versus house brand
—Effectively using size-cost comparisons
—Knowing which is best store to buy specific products

Objective: C. Know various packaging techniques and which are most cost-effective in terms of quality and storage.

Examples:

—Size of package as a storage factor
—Shelf-life as a buying factor
—Comparing fresh, frozen, canned, and prepackaged foods for cost and nutritional value

Objective: D. Know how to place orders.

Examples:

—Ordering in restaurants
—Tipping
—Placing mail or catalog orders

Objective: E. Know where to go to purchase particular goods and services.

Examples:

—Types of stores (cooperatives, department, retail, wholesale)
—What is available where
—Rental services

Objective: F. Know the laws that have been passed to protect consumers.

Examples:

—Listing of ingredients in particular order
—Dating of particular types of consumer goods (prescriptions, dairy products)
—Flammability regulations on drapes and cloth
—Exit regulations for public establishments

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 13. **The individual should understand the economic factors involved in maintaining consumer goods.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Know the basic procedures for the care and upkeep of personal possessions.

Examples:

—Reading a care label on clothing
—Knowing how to clean stains on carpets
—Understanding the relationship between care and durability

Objective: B. Understand the relationship of price to the quality and the life of consumer goods.

Examples:

—Knowing that brand names usually cost more
—Factors other than price that determine quality
—Deciding when quality and durability should be sacrificed to price and ease of use

Objective: C. Understand the principles of crime prevention.

Examples:

—How to protect a car against theft
—How to list possessions for insurance purposes
—What to do at the scene of a theft or break-in to help police solve it

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 14. **The individual should know when and how to use informational resources.** This means that he or she should know:

Objective: A. Which agencies or facilities (e.g., library, television, radio, newspaper, bulletin board) provide various types of information.

Examples:

—Where to go for information about mailing a package
—Types of information provided by state university extension services
—Getting weather reports
—Making maximum use of radio

Objective: B. How to gain access to the various agencies.

Examples:

—Getting permission to use facilities such as a bulletin board
—Getting telephone information for a distant city
—Filling out an application for a library card
—Using the card catalog

Objective: C. The circumstances under which various types of information might be helpful.

Examples:

—Need for information when buying a house
—Need for information about poisons
—Need for information when doing a home-repair job

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 15. **The individual should know how to use transportation systems and services.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Know how to determine the appropriate mode of transportation.

Examples:

—Factors such as cost, time, accessibility and convenience
—Modes such as car, taxi, bus, train, plane, foot, bicycle

Objective: B. Know how to use transportation schedules.

Examples:

—Determining which bus to take to arrive at a certain time
—Figuring out arrival times
—Understanding the special exceptions noted on a schedule

Objective: C. Know how to calculate fares and other costs of transportation.

Examples:

—Calculating a plane fare
—Figuring gas mileage
—Using transfers to advantage

Objective: D. Know how to use road, city, and special transportation maps.

Examples:

—Finding the nearest bus stop on a city bus map
—Calculating distance using a road map
—Determining a route (navigating)

Objective: E. Know how to make reservations and other travel arrangements.

Examples:

—Making hotel reservations by phone
—Buying a commuter ticket
—Using a travel agency
—Understanding confirmations

Objective: F. Know how to drive safely and legally.

Examples:

—Knowing rules of the road (passing, speeding, etc.)
—Knowing how to drive in special weather conditions
—Reading and understanding road signs

Objective: G. Know how to apply for and obtain the various documents associated with travel.

Examples:

—License tests (written and behind-the-wheel)
—Having valid registration
—Using license plates
—Needing a passport

Objective: H. Understand how time zones and daylight saving time may affect travel plans.

Examples:

—How time zones affect long-distance phone calls when making reservations
—How time zones affect travel plans
—How daylight saving time affects work schedules of service workers in the travel industry

Objective: I. Understand how modern transportation causes public problems.

Examples:

—Relation of cars to air pollution
—Concept of carpooling
—Traffic jams and parking problems
—Advantages and disadvantages of mass transit

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 16. **The individual should know when and how to use recreational resources.** This means that he or she should know:

Objective: A. About the types of services offered by various facilities, both public and private, for recreation and entertainment.

Examples:

—What types of activities are available or allowed in public parks
—Where to go to see a movie or play
—What types of museums or cultural activities are available in an area

Objective: B. How to schedule activities at or through the various facilities.

Examples:

—Reading a theater schedule
—Calling for movie information
—Checking the newspaper for T.V. programs
—Subscribing to a series (concert, movie, sports, etc.)

Objective: C. What types of equipment, or preparation, or previous experience might be required for participation in various activities.

Examples:

—Licenses required for special recreational activities
—Renting equipment such as bowling balls, canoes, bicycles, rowboats
—Necessity of auditions for some activities
—Making reservations for some facilities

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 17. **The individual should know how to deal with potential hazards and accidents.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Recognize potential hazards.

Examples:

—Improper storage of flammables
—Medicines and cleaning fluids in reach of children
—Frayed cords and other faulty equipment

Objective: B. Know where and when to apply basic safety measures.

Examples:

—Use of fire extinguishers
—Fire escape procedures
—What to do when caught in a severe storm

Objective: C. Know when and how to apply first aid.

Examples:

—Shock treatment
—Treatment of dog bite or snake bite
—Immobilizing broken bones

Objective: D. Know how and whom to ask for help in emergencies.

Examples:

—Reporting a fire
—Requesting an ambulance
—Knowing where to get help if there is a street fight

SOME DEFINITIONS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COMMISSION'S WORK

COMPETENCY: AN ITEM IN THE SUB-SET OF THE TOTAL UNIVERSE OF SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGES WHICH:

- EVERY STUDENT MUST DEMONSTRATE A MASTERY AS A REQUIREMENT FOR GRADUATION.
- CAN BE DEMONSTRATED BY BEHAVIORS THAT ARE DIRECTLY MEASUREABLE.
- ARE BASED ON LEARNABLE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGES (RATHER THAN INNATE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS.)
- REPRESENT THE COMMUNITY'S (PATRONS, STAFF AND STUDENTS) EXPRESSION OF MINIMUM SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGES ESSENTIAL FOR BASIC SURVIVAL.
- CONTAIN REFERENT AND STATEMENT OF PRECISE REQUIRED SKILLS AND/OR KNOWLEDGES.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: A STATEMENT OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR WHICH:

- PROVIDES EVIDENCE ABOUT THE LEVEL OF COMPETENCY PERFORMANCES
- IS OBSERVABLE AND MEASURABLE.
- MEETS CRITERIA OF CONTENT VALIDITY, OBJECTIVITY AND APPROPRIATENESS.
- INCLUDES THE COMPONENTS OF ACTOR (WHO), ACTION (WHAT) AND SPECIAL CONDITIONS (IF ANY).

CRITERION REFERENCE: A STATEMENT OF PERFORMANCE WHICH:

- IS KEYED TO A SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE INDICATOR.
- IDENTIFIES THE MINIMAL LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE REQUIRED FOR SUCCESS ON A PERFORMANCE INDICATOR.

EXAMPLE: EXAMPLES OF A COMPETENCY, PERFORMANCE INDICATOR AND CRITERION REFERENCE FOLLOW:

- COMPETENCY: THE STUDENT PERFORMS THE ADDITION OPERATION WITH WHOLE NUMBERS.
- PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: GIVEN 25 MINUTES, THE STUDENT WILL COMPLETE A SCHOOL DISTRICT DEVELOPED ADDITION EXAMINATION WHICH CONSISTS OF 25 ADDITION EXERCISES OF VARIOUS DIFFICULTY.
- CRITERION REFERENCE: AT LEAST 20 (80%) ADDITION EXERCISES WILL BE COMPUTED CORRECTLY.

APL SKILLS AND CONTENT GRID

CONTENT AREAS → SKILLS ↓	COMMUNITY RESOURCES	OCCUPATIONAL KNOWLEDGE	CONSUMER ECONOMICS	HEALTH	GOVERNMENT AND LAW
IDENTIFICATION OF FACTS AND TERMS	Knowing what a time zone is	Knowing what skills are needed for clerical jobs	Knowing what "bait and switch" is	Knowing what the normal human temperature is	Knowing what the Bill of Rights says
READING	Reading a bus schedule	Reading a want ad	Reading a contract	Reading a prescription label	Reading a ballot
WRITING	Writing a letter to make hotel reservations	Filling out a W-4 Form	Filing a consumer complaint	Answering a medical questionnaire	Writing a letter to a legislator
COMPUTATION	Computing a plane fare	Computing overtime earnings	Finding the best buy	Computing a daily dosage	Computing a statute of limitations
PROBLEM SOLVING	Determining where to go for help with a problem	Deciding what to say to a bothersome co-worker	Deciding which of two decisions is better in economic terms	Deciding which meal is best, given a set of preconditions	Determining whether a given situation or action is legal

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

CONCERNING THE COMPETENCIES CONCEPT

BEREA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Competencies Commission was organized as a result of specific recommendations which were made by the High School Task Force. The Commission has studied the competencies concept for nearly two years. This study focused on six major goals which Commission Members believe are of critical importance in improving the skills of students in our schools. They are:

- The identification of specific competencies and performance indicators which are necessary for individuals to master to become a coping adult.
- The development of a comprehensive assessment model designed to diagnose student needs in reading, mathematics and other functional skills beginning at grade eight and continuing through grade eleven.
- The expansion and refinement of a Minimum Competencies Assurance Program designed to provide increased assistance for students who have identified needs in the basic skills and functional competencies.
- The organization of a small Task Force, which would include some Competencies Commission Members, to study the feasibility of developing multiple or differential diplomas.
- The implementation of the competencies concept as a graduation requirement with the present tenth grade class (1977-1978) when they graduate in 1979-1980.
- The need to provide comprehensive information regarding the Competencies Concept to the total school community and the need to monitor the successes and problems related to the implementation of the competencies concept.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Q. Why was the Competencies Commission formed?

   A. An analysis of student skills showed that while students in the Berea City School District compared favorably with other school systems under a variety of testing situations, there were students in high school whose basic skills in reading and mathematics were deficient to the extent that they were not able to perform successfully in the classroom.

2. Q. How will the Competencies Concept affect graduation requirements?

   A. In addition to fulfilling the course work (credits) and attendance requirements, each student must demonstrate functional competency in the basic skill areas (reading, listening, writing, computation and problem-solving) and five knowledge areas (health, community resources, consumer economics, government and law, and occupational knowledge.

3. Q. When will this Competencies Concept be implemented?

   A. This requirement will be in effect for the tenth grade class (1977-1978) of Berea High School and Midpark High School when they graduate in 1979-1980.

4. Q. What constitutes the minimum performance level?
   A. The minimum performance level has been determined through extensive research at the level slightly above the level achieved by "dependent citizens"--those citizens who are not productive nor are able to care for their needs.

5. Q. How were the criteria of the minimum performance levels established?
   A. The criteria established must reflect the value judgments of the community as expressed through the Competencies Commission study and research as reflected to the Superintendent and Board of Education Members.

6. Q. Will the minimal competency levels be reviewed?
   A. Yes, the performance of students will be carefully monitored and evaluated. As a result, any necessary changes will be recommended.

7. Q. How will this minimal competency be determined?
   A. After examining over 71 different types of measurement instruments or tests, it was decided to use the 200 item Adult Performance Level Test for eleventh grade students.

8. Q. How well do students need to perform on this Adult Performance Level Test?
   A. After extensive research and study, it has been determined that a student must score at the 70% proficiency level in order to meet the competencies requirement for graduation.

9. Q. Will students take other competencies tests prior to the eleventh grade?
   A. Yes. Students will take reading and mathematics tests at the eighth grade and a shortened version of the Adult Performance Level Test at the tenth grade.

10. Q. What are the purposes of these earlier tests?
    A. These tests are designed to diagnose the students' specific areas of strengths and weaknesses in the basic skills and knowledge areas so that he can be helped to improve those areas of weaknesses.

11. Q. Will the parents be informed of the results of these tests?
    A. Yes. Parents will be advised of these test scores and what they mean. Students will also be apprised.

12. Q. What does the Adult Performance Level Test measure?
    A. The Adult Performance Test measures five content areas and basic skills related to those attributes needed by productive adults. The content areas are: health, occupational knowledge, community resources, government and law, and consumer economics.

13. Q. Is the Adult Performance Level Test really an I.Q. Test?
    A. No. This is a test which requires one to apply accrued learning in "real life" situations.

14. Q. How do students feel about this Competencies Concept?
    A. We have no experience factor; however, students participated as members of the Competencies Commission. Furthermore, schools which have instituted this concept have found that students display better attitudes, work harder, study more and achieve better.

15. Q. Will this Competencies Concept tend to increase the drop-out rate?
    A. The purpose of this program is to "screen students into school" and provide more appropriate learning experiences.

16. Q. Will students be able to take the Adult Performance Level Test at the eleventh grade more than once?
    A. Yes. Again, the purpose is to help students. There are many different forms of the test.

17. Q. Will security for such tests be a problem?
    A. Yes. Every precaution will need to be taken.

18. Q. Will the test affect what is taught in the schools?
    A. Yes, and since the test measures those topics which are critical for individuals to learn, this can create a positive situation.

19. Q. What will the schools do to help students who "fail" the test?
    A. The schools are developing a Minimum Competencies Assurance Program designed to provide students' help in specific areas of need.

20. Q. Why haven't the schools done this before?
    A. The Berea City School District teachers have and are providing extensive assistance to all students. This program will place higher priority on the concept.

21. Q. Must all students pass the Adult Performance Level Test at the 70% proficiency level to graduate?
    A. Yes. All students must pass the test except those who have specific handicaps.

22. Q. Will a student be able to graduate and receive a diploma if he does not "pass" the Adult Performance Level Test.
    A. No. This represents a specific graduation requirement.

23. Q. Will multiple or differentiated diplomas be issued?
    A. The Commission recommended that a task force be established to study the concepts and values of multiple diplomas.

24. Q. What plan will be made to accommodate transfer students?
    A. After students transfer, they become Berea City School Students and will be treated like all students. However, students who transfer at the secondary level will be advised of this Competencies Concept requirement for graduation when they enroll.

25. Q. How will the school community be informed about the "why" and "what" regarding this Competencies Concept.
    A. The Commission feels that all persons--students and parents--in the school community must be informed and understand this concept. The Commission has made a recommendation which places a high priority on community understanding and accepting this concept.

DK/rw
6/15/77